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Answer Every Question

Here's how you do it.

1. **Budget Your Time**

   How much time do you have? Well, imagine that a section of your test lasts one hour and has forty questions on it. Your goal should be to try to get through half of the questions in the first half hour. You don't have to work through every single problem in that time, but you should be working at a steady pace, doing the ones you can, and leaving hard ones for later. You don't want to be stuck on question 10 when you reach the half-hour mark.

2. **Don't Rush**

   Give yourself enough time to choose your answers carefully. Rushing causes mistakes.

3. **Easies First, Hards Second**

   If you don't know the answer to a question, skip it and move on. When you get to the end, go back and try to answer the questions you skipped. Sometimes the answers to hard questions will seem clearer to you when you look at the questions a second time.

4. **Mark What You Skip**

   If you can't write in the test booklet, write down the numbers of questions you skip on scratch paper so you can find them again quickly.

5. **Check Your Answers**

   When you've answered everything you can, go back and check your answers. MAKE SURE that the bubbles you marked on your answer sheet match up with the answers you chose from the test booklet.

Activity

Below are some questions and part of a student's answer sheet. Read each question. Then look at the student's answer and imagine that it is your answer. Do you agree or disagree with it? If you think the answer is correct, write correct on the line provided. If you think the answer is wrong, write down the answer letter you think is correct.

1. **After eating the delicious meal, Lynne felt <u>content</u>.**

A lonely

B sleepy

C happy

D confused

_____

2. **The children laughed at the <u>humorous</u> joke.**

F bad

G polite

H funny

J long

_____

3. **After I walked home in the rain, my clothes were <u>soaked</u>.**

A dirty

B cold

C washed

D wet

_____

Pacing: Skip the hard questions and go back to them later.

Do you have to do the questions in order? No!

If, for example, you've done questions 1 through 4 and then you have trouble with 5, skip it! You can go back and do it later, *after* you've answered all the questions you can do easily. Why spend five precious minutes struggling through a hard, time-wasting question when, in the same amount of time, you could answer three easier ones? *After* you've answered everything you can do easily, go back and spend the time working on the hard ones. Before your time is up, make sure you've filled in an answer for every question, even if you have to guess.

Here's how you do it.

1. Answer the Easies first. Skip the Hards.

2. *Mark* anything you skip so you know to return to it. (If you can't write on the test booklet, make a list of the question numbers on your scratch paper.)

3. Go back and answer the ones you skipped.

4. Choose an answer for everything you skipped, even if you have to guess. Never leave a question blank.

Activity

Solve the following problems. Answer the easier questions first and mark the questions you skip. When you get to the end, go back to the ones you skipped.

1. **39 + 26 =**

   A   13

   B   56

   C   65

   D   66

2. Sandrine has $19 to spend on books. She wants to buy a book for herself and one for her younger brother. The book she wants to buy for herself costs $14. If Sandrine buys the book for $14, how much will she have left to spend on a book for her brother?

A $4

B $5

C $6

D $7

3. Kent made 144 cookies and gave everyone in his class three cookies. He has 51 cookies left. How many people are in Kent's class?

A 31

B 48

C 89

D 12

4. Pierre walks to school. One morning he walked outside wearing his coat, but decided he would be warm enough wearing just a sweater. What is the best estimate of what the temperature was that morning?

A 0°F

B 32°F

C 65°F

D 80°F

Filling in the Bubbles

Your job: to fill in the bubbles correctly.
The computer's job: to read your bubble sheet and figure out your score.

If *you* don't do your job, the *computer* can't do its job and *you* get a lower score.

Correct = Dark, neat, filled-in bubbles
Incorrect = Anything else

Here's how you do it.

1. Use a Number 2 pencil ONLY.

2. Fill in the answer bubbles DARKLY and NEATLY.

3. If you make a mistake, erase your pencil mark COMPLETELY.

4. If you skip a question in your test booklet, be SURE to skip that number on your answer sheet.

5. Always make sure that the question number in your test booklet matches the question number you fill in on your answer sheet.

Activity

Look at the sample answer sheet below. Some of the bubbles are filled in correctly. Other bubbles are not filled in correctly. Circle the question numbers that are filled in correctly.

Filling in the Bubbles - Answers:
2 and 5 should be circled

Using Scratch Paper

When we try to do word problems in our heads, we make silly mistakes. It's much easier when we can see each step on paper. That's what scratch paper is for.

Here's how you do it.

1. Number the problem. (If you're doing question 6, write "6" on your scratch paper.)

2. Write the problem on your scratch paper. BE SURE TO COPY THE PROBLEM CORRECTLY.

3. Show each step on the scratch paper.

4. Review your work to make sure you did each step correctly.

Activity

Use a separate piece of scratch paper to solve these problems. Choose the correct answers from the answer choices that follow the questions.

1. **Crystal earns $5 for each lawn she mows. She is saving for a bike that costs $63. What is the least number of lawns she can mow before she has enough money to buy the bike?**

   A 12

   B 13

   C 14

   D 15

2. **Jonas has 14 books about mammals and 27 books about plants. What is the total number of books that Jonas owns?**

   A 34

   B 40

   C 41

   D 44

3. Mr. Reardon's fourth-grade class is donating 32 pairs of shoes to the homeless shelter. How many shoes in total are being donated?

    A 64

    B 32

    C 96

    D none of the above

4. 22.15 + 13.5 + 4 =

    A 27.35

    B 39.65

    C 2,356

    D 3,965

Key Words

NOT, EXCEPT, first, last, next, later: What do all these words have in common?

They are all words to watch out for on tests!

Here's how you do it.

1. NOT and EXCEPT

Watch out for the words "NOT" and "EXCEPT" in questions. Circle them and be sure to choose the one answer choice that is NOT like the others.

2. "Order" Words

Look out for words such as "first," "next," "later," "last," "after," "finally," and "in conclusion." Circle them in questions and passages. They let you know in what order things happen.

Activity

Read the passage and the recipe below. Circle the key words in the passage and the questions. Then answer the questions.

Fran has to bring her grandma's special potato salad to this year's school picnic. Before she and her mother begin cooking, they read the recipe so they know what supplies they will need.

Grandma May's Potato Salad

Ingredients:
3 lbs. potatoes
6 cloves garlic, pressed
1 medium white onion, chopped
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup minced cilantro
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice
5 tablespoons olive oil
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic salt
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper

First, boil the potatoes. When the potatoes are cooked thoroughly, drain the water and set them aside to cool. Next, cut the potatoes into 1-inch cubes. Then, add the rest of the ingredients to the potatoes and stir the mixture. Finally, chill the potato salad for at least two hours before serving.

---

1. **Which of the following is NOT an ingredient that the recipe calls for?**

    A mayonnaise

    B boiled potatoes

    C lemon juice

    D cilantro

2. **When preparing Grandma May's Potato Salad, which of the following should you do last?**

    A add the rest of the ingredients

    B set the potatoes aside to cool

    C chill the salad before serving

    D boil the potatoes until cooked

3. **Which of the following should you do right after cutting up the potatoes?**

    A drain the potatoes

    B add the other ingredients

    C chill and serve the salad

    D boil the potatoes until cooked

Crossing Out Extra Information

Word problems are full of words, words, words. The question in a word problem will only ask you about certain pieces of information among all those words. Unclutter your brain. Cross out all the extra words you don't need.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the entire problem.

2. Circle the information you need to answer the question.

3. Cross out everything you don't need. (Draw a neat line through it.)

4. Use the circled information to solve the problem.

Activity

Solve the following word problems. Draw a line through any unnecessary information in each word problem. Choose the correct answers from the choices that follow the questions.

1. **Gabriella has seven sweaters, seven pairs of pants, and three pairs of shoes. Gabriella would like to donate some clothes to charity. If Gabriella donates two sweaters and three pairs of pants, how many sweaters and pairs of pants will Gabriella have?**

   A   two sweaters and three pairs of pants

   B   three sweaters and four pairs of pants

   C   five sweaters and four pairs of pants

   D   five sweaters and three pairs of pants

2. Solomon buys his lunch at school three days a week and brings his lunch two days. Solomon's parents give him $2.75 to spend on lunch each day that he buys his lunch at school. The school lunches cost $2.35. At the end of each day, he puts the money he has left over in his bank. Which of the following shows how much money Solomon puts in his bank each day he buys his lunch?

A   2.75 − 2.35

B   2.35 − 2.75

C   2.75 − 2.35 + 3

D   2.75 + 2.35 − 3

3. Cara has $20 and her brother Jacob has $15. They want to buy their father a gift for his birthday. A new toaster costs $25, a golf club costs $30, and a shirt costs $20. If they put their money together and buy their father a golf club, which of the following shows how much money they will have left?

A   20 + 15 + 30

B   20 + 15 − 25

C   20 − 15 + 25

D   20 + 15 − 30

The Princeton Review

MathTest-Taking Strategies

Charts and Graphs

Questions about charts and graphs are not hard, but it is important to know what the chart is showing and what the numbers mean.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read any words that go along with the chart or graph. What is the chart showing? What do the numbers mean?
2. Read the question. Which piece of the chart or graph is it asking about?
3. Find the information needed to answer the question.
4. Find the correct answer among the answer choices.

Activity

Answer the following questions using the chart provided. Choose the correct answer from the answer choices following the questions.

Ang asked each member of his class to name his or her favorite sport. This chart represents the results of his survey.

Sports	Number of Students
Baseball	9
Water-skiing	2
Rugby	1
Football	8
Soccer	10
Tennis	5

1. **Which sport was named twice as many times as tennis?**

   A Baseball

   B Water-skiing

   C Rugby

   D Soccer

2. **How many people are in Ang's class?**
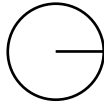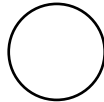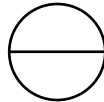
   A 30

   B 32

   C 35

   D 38

Math Vocabulary

Question: What's the difference?
Answer: The difference is what you get when you subtract one number from another.

Here's a review of the math vocabulary you might need to know on a test. Study any of the definitions you don't know. Then take the quiz at the end.

Words about Shapes

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Polygon	This is a closed figure made up of line segments with three or more sides.	Squares, rectangles, triangles, etc.
Radius	This is the distance from the center of a circle to any point on the circle.	
Circumference	The distance around a circle.	
Diameter	The distance from one point on a circle to another point on a circle going through the center. It cuts the circle into two equal parts.	
Perimeter	The measurement of the distance around a polygon. You find the perimeter by adding the measurements of all of the sides.	The perimeter of this rectangle is 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 = 12.
Area	The measure of how much space is covered by the polygon. You find the area by multiplying the measurements of two sides.	The area of this rectangle is 2 × 4 = 8.

Words about Numbers

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Integers	This is any number that does not contain either a fraction or a decimal.	14, 3, 0, –3
Positive Number	This is any number greater than zero.	$\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 104
Negative Number	This is any number less than zero.	$-\frac{1}{2}$, –1, –104
Even Number	This is any number that can be divided by two with NO remainder. Zero is an even number!	102, 16, 2, 0, –16, –102
Odd Number	This is any number that is not divisible by two with NO remainder.	113, 11, 1, –1, –11, –113

Words about Operations

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Sum	This is the result of addition.	The sum of 6 and 2 is 8. 6 + 2 = 8
Difference	This is the result of subtraction.	The difference between 6 and 2 is 4. 6 − 2 = 4
Product	This is the result of multiplication.	The product of 6 and 2 is 12. 6 × 2 = 12
Quotient	This is the result of division.	The quotient when 6 is divided by 2 is 3. 6 ÷ 2 = 3
Remainder	This is the number left over when you divide a number into equal parts.	When 7 is divided by 2, the quotient is 3 and the remainder is 1. $2\overline{)7}$ r1
Factor	These are the numbers used in a multiplication.	2 and 3 are factors of 6.
Multiple	This is a product of two whole numbers.	The number 6 is a multiple of 2 and 3.

Activity

Try to answer the questions below. For anything you can't answer, refer to the vocabulary charts above.

1. **How many integers are there between 1 and 6, including 1 and 6?** _____

2. **How many odd integers are there between 1 and 9, including 1 and 9?** _____

3. **What is the product of 7 and the *smallest* even integer?** _____

4. **What is the quotient when 10 is divided by 2?** _____

5. **What is the sum of 3, 11, and 16?** _____

6. **What is the difference between your answer to number 4 and your answer to number 5?** _____

7. **When you cut a circle in half, that line is called the** _____.

8. **The circumference of a circle is similar to the** _____ **of a polygon.**

9. **If the area of a rectangle is 7 × 12, then what are the factors of that expression?** _____

10. **Is 0 odd or even?** _____

Math Vocabulary - Answers:

1. 1. There are 6 integers between 1 and 6, including 1 and 6.
2. There are 5 odd integers between 1 and 9, including 1 and 9.
3. The smallest even integer is 0. The product of 7 and 0 is 0.
4. When 10 is divided by 2, the quotient is 5.
5. The sum of 3 + 11 + 16 is 30.
6. 6. The difference between 30, the answer to number 5, and 5, the answer to number 4, is 25. (30 − 5 = 25)
7. The diameter is the line that cuts a circle in half.
8. The circumference of a circle is similar to the perimeter of a polygon.
9. The factors of the expression 7 × 12 are 7 and 12.
10. 0 is an even number.

Order of Operations

How would you attack this problem?

$$(5 - 2) \times 4 + 2^2 \div 2 =$$

To solve a problem like this, use PEMDAS. The order of operations is

        Parentheses

        Exponents

        Multiplication

        Division   } (Do these at the same time, from left to right.)

        Addition

        Subtraction   } (Do these at the same time, from left to right.)

You can remember the order of operations by using this phrase.

    "**P**lease **E**xcuse **M**y **D**ear **A**unt **S**ally."

Let's try this problem.

$$(5 - 2) \times 4 + 2^2 \div 2 =$$

Here's how you do it.

   1. Parentheses:

      $(5 - 2)$

      $3 \times 4 + 2^2 \div 2 =$

   2. Exponents:

        2^2

      $3 \times 4 + 4 \div 2 =$

3. Multiplication and Division (from left to right)

$$\underline{(3 \times 4)}$$

$$12 + \underline{4 \div 2} =$$

$$12 + 2 =$$

4. Addition and Subtraction (from left to right)

$$12 + 2 = 14$$

Just take it one step at a time and the math is easy!

Activity

Solve the following problems:

1. $8 - 6 \div 2 =$

2. $6 + (8 - 6) - 4 =$

3. $2 \times 2 + 9 \div 3 =$

4. $2 \times (4 - 2)^2 - 5 =$

Process of Elimination

The more wrong answer choices you can cross off, the easier it is to find the right answer. Crossing off wrong answer choices is called "eliminating."

How much is 7 × 13?

Before you work it out, look at your answer choices.

■ **7 × 13 =**

   A   5

   B   22

   C   91

   D   862

What do you think? Can you cross off the three that don't make any sense? Good. That's Process of Elimination. The easiest way to find the right answer choice on a multiple-choice test is often to cross off the wrong ones. Just using your common sense, you can usually get rid of one or two.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the question carefully.

2. Cross off
   • answer choices that don't make sense.
   • answer choices that say something that is not related to the question.

3. Solve the problem and choose the correct answer from the choices you have left.

Activity

Read the problems and questions. Use common sense to cross off the answer choices you know are wrong. Solve the problem and then choose the correct answer from the choices you have left.

1. **Genevieve is potting plants. She needs 6 cups of soil for each pot. Genevieve has twelve pots. How much soil will she need for all twelve pots?**

   A   72 cups

   B   68 cups

   C   18 cups

   D   12 cups

2. **Maria wants to buy a shirt for each of her four sisters at the fair. If shirts cost $15, how much will Maria spend?**

   A $15

   B $19

   C $60

   D $500

3. **612 × 4 =**

   A   153

   B   618

   C   1,048

   D   2,448

Labeling Paragraphs

After you read each paragraph, ask yourself what you just read. Put it in your own words and label the side of the paragraph with your summary. This way, you'll have something to guide you back to the right part of the passage when you answer a question.

✓ Here's how you do it.

1. After you read each paragraph, write two to three words that describe what the paragraph is about.

2. When you have finished reading, use your paragraph labels to help you figure out the main idea of the passage. Ask yourself two questions: **What?** (What is the passage about?) And **So What?** (What's the author's point about this topic? What is he or she trying to tell me?)

3. Based on your labels, write a sentence that answers those questions.

| junk food – yuck! |

Dara was tired of eating junk food. She had been away at camp for two weeks. All the camp store sold was snacks in plastic sacks. At first, Dara thought that the treats were delicious. But each time she ate them she became so tired! Also, the colors were so strong that they stained her fingers.

| pimples! natural food |

The last straw was when pimples started breaking out on Dara's face. Dara made up her mind to explore the world of fruits before the junk food drove her crazy. So she used her money to buy natural foods.

| award for healthy eating |

On the last night of camp, there was an award ceremony. That night, a new award was given to Dara. It was shaped like a fruit basket filled with golden fruit. It had a small label that read HEALTHY EATING AWARD. Everyone cheered as Dara got up to accept her prize. She cleared her throat and began her acceptance speech.

| Kids can eat healthily. Listen to your body. |

At the end of her speech, Dara said, "When I decided to stop eating junk, I didn't even know the difference between an avocado and a banana. My family never gave me fruits or vegetables to eat. But now, as I accept this award, I realize that kids can teach themselves a lot. Just listen to your body and pay attention to nature. Keep trying to eat healthy foods. You can do it! You body depends on it."

With that, Dara left the small stage and walked toward her seat. The room exploded with applause. She was a real winner!

| Main Idea: Dara got sick of junk food and started eating healthily. Kids can eat healthily by listening to their bodies. |

Activity

Read the passage below and write down labels for each paragraph. Then, based on your paragraph labels, write a sentence that describes what the passage is mostly about.

Katie walked nervously into the school lunchroom. It was her first day at Franklin School and she had been dreading lunchtime all day. Katie didn't know anyone at her new school. Where would she sit? Katie clutched her lunch bag tightly and walked toward the center of the lunchroom.

Just then, Katie noticed a girl who appeared to be waving at her. "She couldn't be waving at me," Katie thought to herself. "I don't have any friends here." Katie turned around to see who the girl was waving at. To Katie's surprise, there was no one standing behind her. Katie looked back at where the girl was sitting. The girl was now pointing to the empty space on the bench next to her. Curious, Katie walked over to the girl's table.

"I was wondering how long it would take you to get the message," the girl said with a smile. "My name's Greta. I sit behind you in Mr. Hanson's class."

Noticing the questioning look on Katie's face, Greta added, "I'm new to the school too. I just started here last Tuesday. I remembered how weird I felt at lunch on my first day, so I thought I would save you a seat." Katie thanked Greta and sat down. She knew she would like her new school.

1. **Use your paragraph labels to write a sentence that tells the main idea of the whole story.**

_____

_____

_____

Titles and Special Print

Many reading passages on tests have clues that will help you find the main idea and other infor-mation. You just have to know where to look for them.

GUIDEPOSTS FOR READING

Where are the guideposts that will lead you to the main idea? Well, they're right before your eyes. The title is a big one. It will always help you find the main idea. Subheadings tell you a lot too. They divide a passage into sections. ("**Before and After**," below, is an example of this.) **Boldfaced** and underlined words are always important and are usually explained in the passage.

Before and After

Some passages have introductory sentences that come before the passage and give you a little information about what you're going to read. (In this passage the introductory sentences at the top, starting *"Many reading passages…"*). Okay, so guess where summary sentences are going to be. You're right! They come after the passage and they review the main idea.

Tools for the Reader

All of these guideposts in passages are tools for you to use. They point you toward the main idea and help you find important information for answering questions. Pay special attention to them when you read and go back to them when you are answering questions.

The title, the subheadings, introductory and summary sentences, and boldfaced and underlined words are all guideposts pointing you to important information in reading passages.

Here's how you do it.

1. Look for guideposts: titles, subheadings, introductory and summary sentences, boldfaced and underlined words

2. As you get to them, read them carefully. Ask yourself: What does this mean?

3. For main-idea questions: Think about all the guideposts together to get your Main Idea.

4. For questions about details: Use the guideposts to help you find the information.

Activity

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

A PIONEER OF ELECTRICITY

In a time when African Americans had few rights, Lewis Latimer managed to make his mark in the world of science. In the late 1800s, Lewis Latimer's interest in electricity led him to improve upon one of the greatest inventions to date–the lightbulb.

Growing Up in Hard Times

Lewis Latimer was born in Chelsea, Massachusetts, in 1848. His mother and father had escaped from slavery in Virginia and moved to the North to find work. While things were better for them in Massachusetts, the family was still very poor. Lewis was only able to go to school for a few years before he had to go to work.

Off to War

Until Lewis was 15 years old, he worked to help support his family. Then, with the beginning of the Civil War, Lewis went off to fight. He fought alongside Northern soldiers for two years. When the war was over, he found a job as an office worker at a company that dealt with inventors. It was there that Lewis's talents began to show themselves.

Making a Great Invention Greater

Lewis was hired to draw up plans for other people's inventions. As he worked he became very interested in Thomas Edison's invention, the lightbulb. Lewis studied the lightbulb in his spare time. In doing so he found a way to improve how it worked. Thomas Edison was so impressed by Lewis's discovery that he hired Lewis to work in his laboratory.

Lewis Latimer spent the rest of his life working for Edison. He went on to make several of his own inventions, such as the electric socket and a special type of circuit. He also wrote a famous book that was used by electricians all over the world.

1. **Why did Lewis Latimer's parents leave Virginia?**

    A   to fight in the war

    B   to send Lewis to school

    C   to escape from slavery

    D   to work with inventors

2. **What was Lewis Latimer's job at the office?**

    F   He drew plans for inventions.

    G   He worked for Thomas Edison.

    H   He helped with the war effort.

    J   He fixed inventions that didn't work.

3. **What is this passage mostly about?**

    A   After the Civil War Latimer was hired to work in an office.

    B   Despite hardships, Latimer became a respected inventor.

    C   Lewis Latimer spent many years working for Thomas Edison.

    D   Latimer found a way to make the lightbulb work better.

4. **Which event happened first in the passage?**

    F   Lewis improved the lightbulb.

    G   Lewis took a job as an office worker.

    H   Lewis wrote a book about electricity.

    J   Lewis fought in the Civil War.

Finding the Main Idea

What's it all about?? For most passages you have to find the Main Idea.

How do you do it? First, you label paragraphs and summarize your labels.

Second, you go back to the guideposts to the main idea. Guideposts are titles and subheadings, and the first and last sentences of a passage.

Here's how you do it.

1. Label paragraphs: As you read each paragraph, write a few words that summarize that paragraph.

2. 2. After you have finished the passage, ask yourself:

    "**What?**" What is the passage about?
    "**So What?**" What's the author's point about this topic? (What is he or she trying to tell me?)

    Write a sentence or a few words that answer these two questions.
    This is the main idea.

3. Guideposts: Go back to any titles, subheadings, first sentences and last sentences. What is the common theme?

4. Choose an answer choice that matches the information in the guideposts and your summary sentence.

Activity

Read the passage. Write down a word or two to describe each paragraph in the space next to the paragraph. Then answer the questions that follow.

ANIMAL HOUSES

Animals live in many different kinds of houses. They live in nests, dens, mounds, and caves. Animals also live in hives, burrows, warrens, and chambers. Some animal houses are strong and sturdy. Other animal houses are just gaps, hollows, or other out-of-the-way places.

What do all of these animal houses have in common? They provide a safe, warm place for the animals that live in them. Rabbits, for example, come out into the open at dusk. But when it starts to get dark, they return to their underground warrens. There they are safe from owls and other enemies.

Ready-Made Homes

Some animals just move into pre-made "houses" that are part of the natural environment. Among the non-builders are mountain lions, bats, and clown fish. Mountain lions make their dens in rock hollows. Bats find caves to make their homes.

Homes Needing Minor Repairs

Some animals choose homes that are almost ready to live in, but need fixing up. Animals that do just a little bit of building include owls, salamanders, and hermit crabs. An owl will clear out space in a hollow tree trunk. Salamanders and other amphibians will bury themselves in a layer of soft leaves. The hermit crab will attach an empty conch shell to its body. In this way the hermit crab actually carries its house on its back.

Custom-Built Homes

Some animals design and build their own homes. The most hard-working builders include such animals as polar bears, gophers, prairie dogs, birds, and trapdoor spiders. Polar bears build cozy dens under the snow. Gophers and prairie dogs dig complicated tunnel systems. Birds make nests out of twigs, leaves, and mud. The trapdoor spider will dig an underground tunnel and then build a door to close off the top.

Two of the most talented animal builders are termites and beavers. Termites build mounds that can measure 20 feet in height. These mounds have fresh water and "air-conditioning" systems. Towers bring in cool air and pump out heat. The walls of a termite mound are thick and strong to keep out heat, anteaters, and other enemies.

An entire city of millions of termites will live in one mound. This city includes apartments for workers, nurseries for babies, and food warehouses. There are also gardens and royal chambers to house the queen and king termite.

Among large animals one of the best builders is the beaver. Beavers use their sharp front teeth to cut branches. They use mud, stones, and the branches to dam streams. The dams create pools where beavers build their lodges.

Some beaver lodges can be 10 feet in height. Inside a beaver lodge, it is warm and dry. Beaver lodges have many entrances and passageways. They lead to chambers that can only be entered from underwater. This keeps the beavers safe from enemies.

Now use your paragraph labels and the guideposts to write a sentence or two that sums up the main idea of the passage.

1. _____

_____

_____

2. **What is the main idea of the passage? Choose the best answer from the choices below.**

    A   The best builder is the beaver.

    B   Many animals use stones and mud to build their houses.

    C   Animals live in many different kinds of houses.

    D   Some animals carry their houses on their backs.

Finding the Main Idea - Answers:

1. Animals live in many different kinds of houses. Some find them, some build them, some just do a little fixing up.

2. C

Maps and Pictures

If a question asks you about a map or a picture, be sure to study all the parts of the picture. Read the words above and below it. Then ask yourself two questions: "What is this?" and "What is it telling me?"
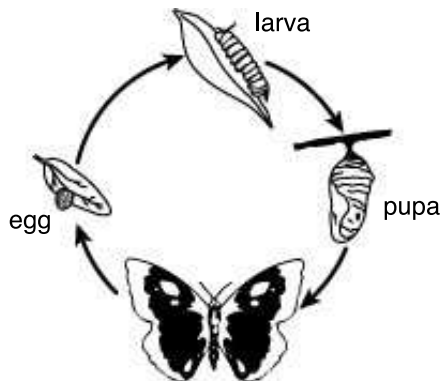
Here's how you do it.

1. Read the title above the picture.

2. Look at the picture. Read the words.
   - Maps: Read the map key, compass, and scale.
   - Cartoons: Read the words inside the cartoon.

3. Read any small print below the map or picture.

4. Ask yourself: What is this? What is it telling me?

5. Read the question. Refer to the information in the picture to check each answer choice.

Activity

Study the graphic below. Then use information from the graphic to answer the questions that follow.

Monarch butterflies grow from egg
to adult in about one month.

1. **What is the second stage of a butterfly's life cycle?**

   A adult

   B egg

   C pupa

   D larva

2. **About how long does it take for a monarch to become an adult?**

    F   four days

    G   one month

    H   four years

    J   one year

3. **What is the purpose of this graphic?**

    A   to show how butterflies survive in nature

    B   to explain how pupae become adults

    C   to show the stages of a butterfly's life

    D   to prove that butterflies are insects

Using Context Clues

If a question asks you to figure out the meaning of a difficult word, look at all the words *around* that word. They will help you figure out the tricky word.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the sentence.

2. Look for clues. Circle them.

3. Passages: If the word is in a passage, read the sentences right before and after the sentence you're trying to figure out. Look for clues. Circle them.

4. Cross off the answer choices that don't match the clues.

5. Plug your answer choice back in to the sentence. Does it work?

Example:

Maria (quickly) sprinted after the lady who (dropped her keys.)

A   marched

B   ran

C   looked

D   saw

What would you do "quickly" if someone "dropped her keys"?

Activity

Choose the word that means most nearly the same thing as the underlined word.
Circle the correct answer choice letter.

1. **Sara was exhausted after running all the way to school.**

    A   happy

    B   tired

    C   smart

    D   fast

2. **The tree's leaves <u>rustled</u> in the wind.**

    F moved

    G cracked

    H grew

    J fell

3. **The teacher told her <u>chattering</u> students to be quiet.**

    A studying

    B bored

    C older

    D talking

4. **Marcus couldn't stop reading the <u>fascinating</u> book about space.**

    F long

    G upsetting

    H short

    J interesting

Reading Between the Lines

■ **This strategy is about**

A   coloring in coloring books

B   making up answers in your head

C   repeating exactly what the passage says

D   using clues to figure something out that wasn't said directly in the passage

Did you figure it out? This strategy is called "Reading between the lines". That's your clue. What does it mean to read between the lines? Answer choice **D**. On some questions you will have to use clues to figure out what the passage is telling you.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the question.

2. Look back at the passage. Find the place that the question is asking about.

3. Look for clues that hint at the correct answer.

4. Cross off answer choices that are NOT supported by the clues you've found in the passage.

5. Choose the best answer from the remaining choices.

Activity

Read each paragraph and then answer the inference questions that follow. Circle the correct answer choice.

> Marcy walked down the dirt road, past the cornfield that served as her front yard. Although she was tired from a long day at school, Marcy knew she still had chores to do when she got home. She walked up the front steps to her house and put her book bag down on the porch. Then she grabbed the feed bucket and made her way to the stables.

1. **Based on information in the passage, which of the following best describes Marcy's home?**

A   a house in the suburbs

B   an apartment in the city

C   a farm in the country

D   a cabin in the woods

Victor's mom couldn't help but notice the worried look on his face. She carefully laid out the clothes Victor would wear the next day. Then she turned to him and said, "Don't worry, dear. You'll make lots of new friends tomorrow." Then she added, "And I'm sure your new teacher will be very nice too."

2. **Based on information in the passage, what is Victor probably worried about?**

    A   going away to summer camp

    B   moving to a new home

    C   seeing his old friends at school

    D   his first day at a new school

When Ms. Darren opened the front door, Maria could barely contain her excitement. Ms. Darren sensed Maria's eagerness and quickly showed Maria and her father to the kitchen. Maria spied the wooden box immediately and crouched down to get a closer look. She was surprised at how tiny the furry creatures were. Some yawned, some yipped, and others whined and nuzzled their mother. Maria picked up one of the little fluff-balls and held it to her face. "I think she has decided," her father said, smiling.

3. **Based on information in the passage, what was in the wooden box?**

    A   toys

    B   puppies

    C   turtles

    D   rabbits

Reading Between the Lines - Answers:
1. C   2. D   3. B

Facts vs. Opinions

FACT: George Washington was the first president of the United States.
OPINION: George Washington was our country's best president.

A fact is something that is true. An opinion is based on someone's thoughts or feelings. Some test questions ask you to tell the difference between the two.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the question and answer choices.

2. For each answer choice decide if it is true or if it is based on a person's feelings.

3. To identify a FACT: Cross off answer choices that are based on feelings.

4. To identify an OPINION: Cross off answer choices that are true, no matter who you ask.

Activity

Read the sentences below. Then decide whether each statement is a fact or an opinion. Write your answers on the lines provided.

1. **My uncle was on the evening news last week.** _____

2. **Lloyd's shoes are soaking wet.** _____

3. **Mia always wears nice clothes.** _____

4. **Javier had to go to the nurse's office today.** _____

5. **Ms. Jacks is a very funny person.** _____

6. **It is too cold outside to ride my bike.** _____

7. **Mom changed the flat tire on her car before dinner.** _____

Facts vs. Opinions - Answers:
1. Fact   2. Fact   3. Opinion   4. Fact   5. Opinion   6. Opinion   7. Fact

Process of Elimination

The more wrong answer choices you can cross off, the easier it is to find the right answer. Crossing off wrong answer choices is called "eliminating."

Here's a reading question without a passage. So how can you answer it? Try using Process of Elimination.

■ **Lila's parents raised her allowance because she**

    A   spent more time at the park

    B   wouldn't do the dishes

    C   made her brother do more work

    D   started doing more chores

What do you think? Can you cross off the three that don't make any sense? Good. That's Process of Elimination. The easiest way to find the right answer choice on a multiple-choice test is often to cross off the wrong ones. Just using your common sense, you can often get rid of one or two.

On a reading test the answer choices may not be as silly as the ones written above, but Process of Elimination will help you find the right answer in the same way.

Here's how you do it.

1.   Read the question.

2.   Find the place in the passage that the question is asking about.

3.   Look at each answer choice. Does it match what the passage says? Is there information in the passage that points you to this answer choice? If not, cross it off.

4.   When you have crossed off as many answer choices as you can, choose your answer from the remaining choices.

Activity

Read the questions. Use common sense to cross off the answer choices you know are wrong. Then choose the correct answer.

1. Jeremy's favorite subject in school is

   A   eating

   B   knitting

   C   basketball

   D   science

2. Vera likes all vegetables except for

   F   spaghetti

   G   spinach

   H   oranges

   J   peppermint

3. Caesar got a good grade on the math test because he

   A   studied hard

   B   played baseball

   C   took a nap

   D   played games

4. I need new sneakers for

   A   lunch

   B   gym class

   C   social studies

   D   reading

General Strategies

Answer Every Question

Answers:

1. C
2. Correct
3. D

Pacing

Answers:

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. C

Filling in the Bubbles

Answers:

2 and 5 should be circled

Using Scratch Paper

Answers:

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. B

Key Words

Answers:

1. A
2. C
3. B

Process of Elimination: Math

Answers:

Example C

1. **A**
2. C
3. D

Process of Elimination: Reading

Answers:

Example J

1. D
2. G
3. A
4. B

Math Strategies

Crossing Out Extra Information

Answers:

1. C
2. A
3. D

Charts and Graphs

Answers:

1. D
2. C

Order of Operations

Answers:

1. 5
2. 4
3. 7
4. 3

Math Vocabulary

Answers:

1. There are 6 integers between 1 and 6, including 1 and 6.
2. There are 5 odd integers between 1 and 9, including 1 and 9.
3. The smallest even integer is 0. The product of 7 and 0 is 0.
4. When 10 is divided by 2, the quotient is 5.
5. The sum of 3 + 11 + 16 is 30.
6. The difference between 30, the answer to number 5, and 5, the answer to number 4, is 25. (30 − 5 = 25)
7. The diameter is the line that cuts a circle in half.
8. The circumference of a circle is similar to the perimeter of a polygon.
9. The factors of the expression 7 × 12 are 7 and 12.
10. 0 is an even number.

Reading Strategies

Labeling Paragraphs

Answers:

Katie's nervousness about lunchtime at her new school is relieved by a friendly girl who asks Katie to eat with her.

Titles and Special Print

Answers:

1. C
2. F
3. B
4. J

Finding the Main Idea

Answers:

1. Animals live in many different kinds of houses. Some find them, some build the, and some just do a little fixing up.
2. C

Underlining

Answers:

1. A
2. H
3. B

Maps and Pictures

Answers:

1. D
2. G
3. C

Using Context Clues

Answers:

1. B
2. F
3. D
4. J

Reading Between the Lines

Answers:

1. C
2. D
3. B

Facts vs. Opinions

Answers:

1. Fact
2. Fact
3. Opinion
4. Fact
5. Opinion
6. Opinion
7. Fact